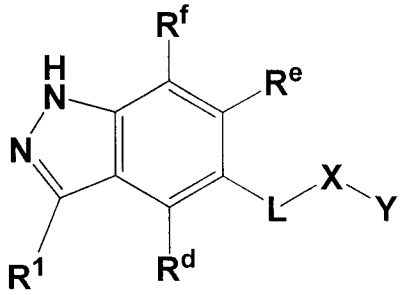
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. – 19. (cancelled).

20. (currently amended) A compound represented by the formula (III), a salt thereof or a hydrate of them.



wherein

R^1 designates a group represented by the formula $-(CO)_h-(NR^a)_j-(CR^b=CR^c)_k$-Ar (wherein R^a, R^b and R^c each independently designate a hydrogen atom, halogen atom, hydroxyl group, an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkyl group, an optionally substituted C_{2-6} alkenyl group, an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkoxy group, an optionally substituted C_{2-6} alkenyloxy group, an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkylthio group, an optionally substituted C_{2-6} alkenylthio group, an optionally substituted C_{3-8} cycloalkenyl group, an optionally substituted 4- to 14-membered non-aromatic heterocyclic group, an optionally substituted C_{6-14} aryl group or an optionally substituted 5- to 14-membered heteroaryl group; Ar designates an optionally substituted C_{6-14} aryl group or an optionally substituted 5- to 14-membered heteroaryl group; and h, j and k each independently designate 0 or 1, provided that when h and j are 0, k is 1);

R^d, R^e and R^f each independently designate a hydrogen atom, halogen atom, hydroxyl

group, cyano group, nitro group, carboxyl group, an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkyl group, an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkoxy group, an optionally substituted C_{2-7} acyl group, $-CO-NR^{2a}R^{2b}$, $-NR^{2b}CO-R^{2a}$ or $-NR^{2a}R^{2b}$ (wherein R^{2a} and R^{2b} each independently designate a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkyl group), provided that at least one of R^d, R^e and R^f is not a hydrogen atom;

L designates a single bond, an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkylene group, an optionally substituted C_{2-6} alkenylene group or an optionally substituted C_{2-6} alkynylene group;

X designates a single bond, or a group represented by $-NR^7-$, $-O-$, $-CO-$, $-S-$, $-SO-$, $-SO_2-$, $-CO-NR^8-Z-$, $-C(O)O-$, $-NR^8-CO-Z-$, $-NR^8-C(O)O-$, $-NR^8-S-$, $-NR^8-SO-$, $-NR^8-SO_2-Z-$, $-NR^9-CO-NR^{10}-$, $-NR^9-CS-NR^{10}-$, $-S(O)_m-NR^{11}-Z-$, $-C(=NR^{12})-NR^{13}-$, $-OC(O)-$, $-OC(O)-NR^{14}-$ or $-CH_2-NR^8-COR^7-$ (wherein R^7, R^8, R^9, R^{10}, R^{11}, R^{12}, R^{13} and R^{14} each independently designate a hydrogen atom, halogen atom, hydroxyl group, an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkyl group, an optionally substituted C_{2-6} alkenyl group, an optionally substituted C_{2-6} alkynyl group, an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkoxy group, an optionally substituted C_{2-6} alkenyloxy group, an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkylthio group, an optionally substituted C_{2-6} alkenylthio group, an optionally substituted C_{3-8} cycloalkyl group, an optionally substituted C_{3-8} cycloalkenyl group, an optionally substituted 4- to 14-membered non-aromatic heterocyclic group, an optionally substituted C_{6-14} aryl group or an optionally substituted 5- to 14-membered heteroaryl group, Z designates a single bond or an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkylene group, and m designates 0, 1 or 2); and

Y designates any one group selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, halogen atom, nitro group, hydroxyl group, cyano group, carboxyl group or an optionally

substituted C_{1-6} alkyl group, an optionally substituted C_{2-6} alkenyl group, an optionally substituted C_{2-6} alkynyl group, an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkoxy group, an optionally substituted C_{3-8} cycloalkyl group, an optionally substituted C_{3-8} cycloalkenyl group, an optionally substituted 4- to 14-membered non-aromatic heterocyclic group, an optionally substituted C_{6-14} aryl group, an optionally substituted 5- to 14-membered heteroaryl group, an optionally substituted amino group and a group represented by the formula -W-R^{15}(wherein W designates CO or SO_2; and R^{15} designates an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkyl group, an optionally substituted amino group, an optionally substituted C_{6-14} aryl group or an optionally substituted 5- to 14-membered heteroaryl group).

21. (cancelled).

22. (original) The compound according to claim 20, a salt threof or a hydrate of them, wherein either one of R^d, R^e and R^f is a halogen atom or an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkoxy group.

23. (currently amended) The compound according to claim 20 or claim 22 ~~any one of claims 20 to 22~~, a salt thereof or a hydrate of them, wherein at least one of R^b and R^c is not a hydrogen atom, and L is a single bond, an optionally substituted C_{2-6} alkenylene group or an optionally substituted C_{2-6} alkynylene group, provided that, when L is a single bond, the case where X is a single bond, and Y is an optionally substituted C_{1-6} alkyl group, an optionally substituted C_{3-8} cycloalkyl group, an optionally substituted C_{3-8} cycloalkenyl group, an optionally

substituted 4- to 14-membered non-aromatic heterocyclic group, an optionally substituted C_{6-14} aryl group or an optionally substituted 5- to 14-membered heteroaryl group is excluded.

24. – 48. (cancelled).

49. (previously presented) The compound according to claim 20, a salt thereof or a hydrate of them, wherein L and X are a single bond, Y is a 5- to 6-membered heteroaryl group, and Y is a group optionally substituted with 1 to 3 group(s) selected from Substituent group a2 described in claim 43.

50. (previously presented) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the compound according to claim 20, a salt thereof or a hydrate of them, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

51. (previously presented) A c-Jun amino-terminal kinase (JNKs) inhibitor comprising the compound according to claim 20, a salt thereof or a hydrate of them.

52. (previously presented) A c-Jun amino-terminal kinase 1 (JNK 1), c-Jun amino-terminal kinase 2 (JNK 2) and/or c-Jun amino-terminal kinase 3 (JNK 3) inhibitor, comprising the compound according to claim 20, a salt thereof or a hydrate of them.

53. (previously presented) An agent for treating or preventing immunological diseases, inflammatory diseases or metabolic disorders, which comprises the compound according to claim 20, a salt thereof or a hydrate of them.

54. (previously presented) An agent for treating or preventing neurodegenerative diseases, which comprises the compound according to claim 20, a salt thereof or a hydrate of them.

55. (previously presented) An agent for treating or preventing Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's chorea, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, multiple sclerosis or spinocerebellar degeneration, which comprises the compound according to claim 20, a salt thereof or a hydrate of them.

56. – 58. (cancelled).

59. (previously presented) A method for treating or preventing a disease based on JNK 3 action against which inhibition of a c-Jun amino-terminal kinase 3 (JNK 3) is effective for prevention or treatment, immunological diseases, inflammatory diseases, metablic disorders and/or neurodegenerative diseases, which comprises adiministering a pharmacologically effective amount of the compound according to claim 20, a salt thereof or a hydrate of them to a patient.

60. (previously presented) A method for treating or preventing a disease based on JNK action against which inhibition of a c-Jun amino-terminal kinase (JNK) is effective for prevention or treatment, immunological diseases, inflammatory diseases, metablic disorders or neurodegenerative diseases, which comprises adiministering a pharmacologically effective amount of the compound according to claim 20, a salt thereof or a hydrate of them to a patient.

61. (currently amended) The method according to claim 60 [[20]], wherein the disease is Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's chorea, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, multiple sclerosis or spinocerebellar degeneration.

62. (new) A method for treating a disease based on JNK action against which inhibition of a c-Jun amino-terminal kinase (JNK) is effective, wherein said disease is Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's chorea, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, multiple sclerosis, or spinocerebellar degeneration, which method comprises administering a pharmacologically effective amount of the compound according to claim 20, a salt thereof or a hydrate of them to a patient.